REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated June 16, 2003. Claims 1-28 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-28 have been rejected. Claims 1, 4, 5 and 22 have been amended for clarification. Accordingly, claims 1-28 remain pending in the application. For the reasons set forth more fully below, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims as presented are allowable. Consequently, reconsideration, allowance, and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicant includes a Petition for Extension of Time to extend the deadline for filing a response by one (1) month from September 16, 2003 to October 16, 2003.

Applicant appreciates Examiner's granting an interview in the present application.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

The Examiner states,

> **3. Claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Presnell, et al., US# 6,182,067 B1 in view of Dornbush et all, US# 6,471,521 B1.**
>
> **As per claims 1, 9, 11, and 26-28, Presnell et al. teaches "receiving information input a database; organizing items . . . database" (see col. 4, lines 10-44) "allowing users to access and sort items of information according to selected rating criteria . . ." (see col. 8, lines 31-47). Presnell does not explicitly teach "collecting ratings and comments associated . . ." Dornbush et al. "collecting ratings and comments associated . . ." (see fig. 4-sheet 8 of 22 and col. 10, lines 55-67). It would have been obvious at the time of the invention for one of ordinary skill in the art to have combined the teachings of Dornbush and Presnell above, because using the steps of "collecting ratings and comments associated..." would have given those skilled in the art the tools to measure the relevancy of data received from a data ratings and comments regarding the data. This gives users the advantage of receiving information relevant data based on input by users who are familiar with that data.**
>
> **As per claim 2, Presnell et al. teaches "adding content, multi-criteria ratings and comment . . ." (see col. 9, lines 55-67 and col. 10, lines 1-17).**
>
> **As per claim 3, Presnell et al. teaches "displaying rating scores for each item..." (see col. 16, lines 43-67).**

As per claim 4, Presnell et al. teaches "allowing users to locate and access selected content in a graphic display format""(see col. 12, lines 35-65).

As per claim 5, Presnell et al. teaches "constraining the input according to subject and topic classification choices made by user prior to contributing content" (see col. 18, lines 4-39).

As per claims 6-7, Presnell et al. teaches "graphic symbols for representing the aggregate rating scores for each criteria . . ." (see col. 16, lines 40-65).

As per claims 8 and 27, Presnell et al. teaches "provides a side-side...allowing individuals to make informed decisions ..." (see col. 3, lines 20-40).

As per claim 10, Presnell et al. teaches "the graphic display format provides a display of other comments providing additional information..." (see col. 3, lines 14-56).

As per claim 12, Presnell et al. teaches "displaying the level of support for an item of information..." (see abstract).

As per claims 13-14, Presnell et al. teaches "selected rating criteria . . . weighted combinations . . ." (see col. 4, lines 16-67).

As per claims 15-17, Presnell et al. teaches "selected personal preferences indicating the importance of each rating criteria . . ." (see col. 16, lines 46-67).

As per claim 18, Presnell et al. teaches "allowing users to search on a given subject . . ." (see col. 15, lines 20-55).

As per claims 19-21, Presnell et al. teaches "allowing users to add new subject . . . knowledge base" (see col. 18, lines 2-17).

As per claim 22, Presnell et al. teaches "allowing content . . . comment feedback" (see col. 3, lines 39-63).

As per claim 23, Presnell et al. teaches "a first area that shows the subject . . ." (see col. 11, lines 34-67) "a third area that shows ratings related to the subjects . . ." (see col. 16, lines 40-67).

As per claim 24, this claim is rejection on grounds corresponding to the arguments given above for rejected claim 6 and are similarly rejected.

As per claim 25, Presnell et al. teaches "provides a navigation area indicating where the posting is located within the data base structure" (see fig. 11A-sheet 14 of 31).

Response to Arguments

The Examiner states,

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-28 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

The patents that have been cited involve inventions and claims completely distinct from the present invention. During the course of the ongoing correspondence, there has been a great deal of confusion caused by the common terms in describing the respective inventions. A brief overview of the field and purpose of our invention will do much to clarify the distinctions that set the present invention apart from all previous inventions in the field of knowledge management.

As is stated in the abstract of the present invention, the present invention is a "*knowledge sharing system ... which allows every member of a knowledge sharing group to benefit from the aggregate knowledge, experience and opinions of other members of the group.*" Keeping this primary purpose of the invention in mind, I am hoping that you will be able to see the critical distinctions between the present invention and the two other patents cited as a basis for rejection of our claims.

The system functions as a way to combine the collective knowledge of the group, to filter most reliable and relevant knowledge based on ratings and comments from others, and to allow individuals to find the information that is most useful to them based on the rating criteria that they use to sort the information. This is the essence of our claim #1 a-d, which we believe is truly unique, useful and non-obvious, and should therefore be allowable as amended below.

Briefly stated, what is claimed is a method for sharing knowledge that uses data generated by ratings and quantified pro and con comments from other people to filter information which has been submitted for consideration by members of a knowledge-sharing group. The net effect of the process is to yield the most reliable and valuable information from the collection of items and making it available to each member of the group along with pro and con comments that

provide additional perspectives on both sides of any issue. In addition to sorting based on multi-criteria ratings, an algorithm involving the ratio of positive to negative comments is also used to filter items.

Although the two other patents have been cited as a basis for rejection bear a nominal resemblance to the present invention, they are actually completely different in function and intent. I believe that the confusion arises in part from the common use of several terms that we use in our claims, but are actually used to define different things in the other inventions. I will attempt to explain these in a straightforward way that I'm hoping will help you to see the critical distinctions.

Regarding Presnell et al.

This patent discloses a system for accessing information from an existing database on the basis of usage, not ratings or quantified comments. This is essentially a knowledge management system to help people find needles in data haystacks. The description uses the terms weighting, rating, comments, but they are used to define different things. Weighting in Presnell refers to weighting assigned using usage data, i.e., how often data is accessed by others gives it a "weighting". Ratings can be added to the items, but are not used as an algorithmic basis for sorting and filtering as in our system. Comments can be added, but again are not used to filter the data. In our system, comments are tracked in separate database fields so that the ratio of positive to negative comments can be used to filter items by comment support level (group corroboration).

Regarding Dornbush et al

The Dornbush patent is in a completely different field and is a different type of system. The field of that invention as described in the patent itself is, "training and online learning", i.e., education. US patent 6,471,521 is a tool for automating the classroom teaching process usig an online environment for creating and administering quizzes and class discussion. Comments and ratings in Dornbush's system, as in Presnell, can be added to the database for viewing by others, but do not form the basis of a filtering mechanism to cause the most highly rated items to rise to the top of a sorted list as in our system. More importantly, our tool is not a teaching tool for training or learning a set curriculum, but rather, is a set of tools for generating knowledge itself, and combining and filtering the collective knowledge and experience of a group and making it available to individuals within that group.

In light of this clarification, we are hoping that you will see that the individual comparisons cited in your last response do not apply and reconsider our amended claims. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 1-28 are allowable as now presented.

Applicant's attorney believes that this application is in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

SAWYER LAW GROUP LLP

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Date

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